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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2493

Feb. 1, 1991

MADIGAN NOMINATED -- President George Bush has nominated Rep. Edward Madigan (R-Ill.), 55, to be 24th secretary of agriculture. Madigan was first elected to Congress in 1972. Representing one of the most important soybean & corn districts in the country (his district includes former Ag Sec. John Block's farm), Madigan is currently ranking minority member of the House Agriculture Committee. His nomination requires Senate approval. Madigan will be the fifth person from Illinois to serve in the president's cabinet. (The other four are: Labor Secretary Lynn Martin, Transportation Secretary Samuel Skinner, Veterans Affairs Secretary Edward Derwinski & EPA Administrator William Reilly.) "My goal, Mr. President," said Madigan, "is to carry out your desire that rural Americans have a strong voice in the councils of government. This will be a job that touches everyone in the country."

YEUTTER ELECTED -- The Republican National Committee formally elected Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter as chairman on Jan. 25. Yeutter is expected to leave USDA around March 1. Contact: Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623.

DEEP FROZEN APPLE TREES -- USDA scientists are testing deep freezing as a way to preserve the genetic diversity of apples, but at less cost and using less land. "We are hoping to find a method for preserving apple varieties that doesn't rely on the land and labor needed to maintain an orchard," says Philip L. Forsline, curator of USDA's apple collection in Geneva, N.Y. The scientists are freezing apple seeds and stock in liquid nitrogen in the 25-year experiment. Contact: Philip L. Forsline (315) 787-2390.

USDA PROPOSES DAIRY BREEDING STANDARDS -- USDA is seeking public comments on a proposal to establish U.S. standards for dairy breeding cows & heifers. Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, says USDA proposed the standards in response to initiatives from the dairy industry & exporters. Under the proposal, dairy animals would have four grades -- "Supreme," "Approved," "Medium" & "Common." Comments are due by March 11 to: Fred L. Williams, Jr., USDA-AMS, Rm. 2603-S, PO Box 96456, Washington, DC 20090-6456. Contact: Fred L. Williams, Jr. (202) 447-4486.

SALMONELLA OUTBREAKS -- A preliminary review indicates that eggs were to blame for 18 of 66 reported human outbreaks of salmonella enteritidis in the U.S. in 1990, says James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service. Glosser says U.S. Public Health Service investigations led to 12 flocks in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Indiana & Delaware. Investigations are pending on six of the 66 outbreaks. Two-thirds of the cases happened in the Northeast & Mid-Atlantic states. Contact: Margaret Webb (301) 436-7799.



SCIENTISTS FIND MUSCLE TOOL -- A USDA scientist says a natural chemical produced by fungi could serve as a tool for understanding how calcium is regulated inside skeletal & cardiac muscle. Ronald T. Riley, a USDA research pharmacologist, found this natural chemical changes the way calcium moves into & out of muscle cells. USDA scientists studying muscle disease in animals believe their efforts will benefit humans. Contact: Ronald T. Riley (404) 546-3377.

SOIL & WATER CONFERENCE -- The Soil & Water Conservation Society will hold an international conference, "Cover Crops for Clean Water," April 9 - 11 in Jackson Tenn. Conference registration includes a tour of cover crop research in progress at the University of Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station in Milan. Contact: SWCS (515) 289-2331.

ACKER NAMED FAS ADMINISTRATOR -- Sec. Yeutter has named Duane Acker administrator of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. Acker succeeds Rolland E. (Bud) Anderson, who for personal reasons due to an illness in the family, asked to be reassigned to other FAS activities. Acker, currently administrator of USDA's Office of International Cooperation & Development, will retain those duties in addition to assuming the new responsibilities. Acker has held a number of positions in both government & academia. He was president of the Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kans., from 1975-86. He received his doctorate in animal nutrition from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater and bachelor's & master's from Iowa State University. Contact: Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623.

DAIRY MARKETS SETTLE DOWN -- After two turbulent years, the dairy markets are returning to normal. However, a return to surplus conditions in skim milk as well as cream markets may be required for markets to settle down. Farm & wholesale prices in 1991 should be relatively steady because of expanded milk output, smaller disappearance of skim milk solids & continued government buys of butter, nonfat dry milk & cheese. But the prices will be much lower than last year for most of 1991. Contact: Jim Miller or Sara Short (202) 219-0770.

BELOW-AVERAGE STREAMFLOWS -- Much of the West may be facing yet another year of below-average streamflows, says William Richards, chief of USDA's Soil Conservation Service. Based on snowpack & precipitation data, Richards expects streamflows below 70 percent of normal in areas of eight states: all of California & Nevada, central Utah, south-central Idaho, northwestern Colorado, southern & eastern Oregon, eastern Wyoming & central Arizona. Contact: Ted Kupelian (202) 447-5776.

FOOD AID BIG BUSINESS -- USDA's food assistance programs are big business -- \$27.5 billion in 1991. They make up nearly half of USDA's budget. Most people have heard of the largest programs: food stamps, school lunch, WIC -- the special supplemental food program for women, infants & children. Yet, much of the public is unaware that USDA operates these programs. In all, USDA administers 13 domestic food assistance programs that help provide better nutrition to low-income people, the elderly & school children. All of the USDA-administered food assistance programs received budget increases in the 1991 budget. Contact: Phil Shanoltzer (703) 756-3286.



FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1756 -- This generation of Americans has been called the "Throwaway Society." However, slowly, we are learning that we must recycle & help preserve our delicate environment. On this edition of **Agriculture USA**, Brenda Curtis reports on Chautauqua County, New York, where recycling is a reality in rural America. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1237 -- Salmonella update; new food safety booklet; cows & global warming; what you eat is what you breast feed your baby; caring for an elderly parent. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1745 -- USDA News Highlights; deficiency payments; the Western drought continues; 1990/91 soybean payments; cows & methane. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1405 -- Salmon for a healthy heart; diet & cholesterol levels; flax flour -- a healthy choice; dye test detects food pathogen; cold-tolerant bacterium. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tues., Feb. 12, weekly weather & crop update, farm labor report, world ag situation, world oilseed situation, world cotton situation; Wed., Feb. 14, honey production; Thurs., Feb. 14, feed situation; Fri., Feb. 15, milk production, livestock poultry outlook.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m., EST, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE
(Week of Jan. 31, Feb. 2 & 4, 1991)

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on the environmental provisions of the 1990 farm bill; Will Pemble reports on putting seeds to sleep.

ACTUALITIES -- Carla Hills, US Trade Representative, on GATT talks progress; Norton Strommen, USDA meteorologist, with a crop & weather update; USDA Economist Leland Southard on the livestock & poultry situation; USDA Asst. Secretary James Moseley on western water supplies; USDA Economist Ian McCormack with a U.S. oilseeds outlook.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill on home-based businesses; Pat O'Leary reports on USDA's farm costs & returns survey.

Available on Satellite Westar IV, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EST
SATURDAY 10 - 10:45 a.m., EST
MONDAY 8 - 8:45 a.m., EST

A reminder! New satellite times took effect in November of 1990. Please note the changes in Saturday & Monday feed times.

OFFMIKE

PRODUCERS...are looking forward to the growing season, says **John Winfield** (Mississippi Network, Jackson). Cotton prices remain attractive prompting many farmers to closely review flexibility provisions in the new Farm Bill. Winter wheat is in good shape, there have been few hard-freeze days, and subsoil moisture is being replenished.

EITHER...there are more meetings this winter or I'm getting older, says **Gene Williams** (WNAX, Yankton, S.D.). Some area producer organizations have held their meetings on the same date making coverage difficult. Extension Service has also been active in conducting meetings for crop and livestock producers. Gene says there has been little accumulation of snow this winter, most of it melting before the next storm arrives.

AGRI-BUSINESS COMMITTEE...of the Davenport, Iowa, Chamber of Commerce has named **Max Molleston** (WKBF, Rock Island) chairman.

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Office of Public Affairs
Radio-TV Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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A BUSY TIME OF YEAR...for Jim Coyle (KRES, Moberly, Mo.). He will be covering the upcoming 3rd annual Beef Expo held near Columbia, sending reports to nine stations; moderating a panel discussion at the Feb. 28 - March 1 Missouri Pork Producers Conference dealing with environmental challenges; and covering events at Ag Science Week at Columbia College. Jim says the station held its 14th annual Farm Show during an ice storm, but attendance and the number of exhibitors set records. Exhibitors told Jim the producers had a positive mood.

TWO VIDEOS...produced by the Radio & TV Division will be shown to farmers in Romania. Officials there requested "America's Most Crucial Industry" and "USDA -- The People's Department." They plan to use the programs as an educational tool to help teach Romanian farmers about American agriculture.

Vic Powell
VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division